

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 5241

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, PA
SUBJ: INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS PROPOSING TO SEND TRIAL
OBSERVERS TO PARAGUAY

REF: STATE 306616

1. CRISTOBAL ORTIZ HAS NOT BEEN REARRESTED. OF ALL THE MISION
DE AMISTAD PERSONNEL RELEASED IN OCTOBER 19, 1976, HE IS THE ONLY
ONE AGAINST WHOM ALL CHARGES HAVE BEEN DROPPED.

2. JOSE GIL OJEDA WAS AGAIN DETAINED IN LATE NOVEMBER ON A
COURT ORDER (RATHER THAN AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INTERIOR
MINISTRY). WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED THE COURT'S ACTION WAS BASED ON
TESTIMONY IN THE POSSESSION OF THE JUDGE HANDLING THE CASE WHICH
ALLEGEDLY IMPLICATED GIL OJEDA MORE DEEPLY THAN ORIGINALLY THOUGHT
IN THE TERRORIST PLOT OF LAST APRIL, WHICH HAD LED TO HIS ORIGINAL
ARREST.

3. RAMON JIMENEZ AND BASILICA ESPINOLA ARE FREE, BUT ASSUME
THEY WILL FACE TRIAL IN THE MONTHS AHEAD. THEY HAVE ENGAGED
COUNSEL TO PREPARE THEIR DEFENSE.

4. THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS A COMPOSITE OBTAINED FROM MISION
DE AMISTAD AND GOP SOURCES, WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN IN
FREQUENT CONTACT REGARDING THIS AND OTHER PENDING HR CASES.
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5. THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT IF PARAGUAY WOULD ALLOW ILHR
OBSERVERS TO ATTEND EVENTUAL TRIALS OF MISION DE AMISTAD
PERSONNEL WOULD BE TO SOUND OUT GOP. (WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE
A MISTAKE FOR THE OBSERVERS MERELY TO APPEAR ON THE
SCENE, HOPING TO BE ADMITTED TO THE COURTROOM.)

THIS COULD BE DONE EITHER BY AN INQUIRY FROM THE ILHR DIRECTLY TO THE GOP, OR WE COULD MAKE AN INFORMAL APPROACH ON ILHR'S BEHALF. ON BALANCE, WE THINK ILHR SHOULD ITSELF MAKE THE INITIAL INQUIRY, WHICH THE EMBASSY WOULD BE GLAD TO FOLLOW UP ON (IF, AS PROBABLY WOULD OCCUR, ILHR GOT NO RESPONSE WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME).

6. RE: TIMING - THE COURTS ARE NOW IN RECESS UNTIL SOMETIME IN FEBRUARY. THERE IS NO WAY TO PREDICT HOW LONG IT MAY BE BEFORE THE MOUNTING NUMBER OF CASES RELATED TO THE EVENTS OF DECEMBER 1974 AND FOLLOWING MAY BE TRIED. AS SOON AS WE HAVE SOME INDICATION ABOUT THE MISION DE AMISTAD CASES, WE SHALL LET YOU KNOW. (WE ARE IN VERY CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE MISION DIRECTORATE).

7. FROM THE EMBASSY'S STANDPOINT, PARAGRAPHS 1-4 AND 6 ABOVE MAY BE TREATED AS UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION.
BRIGGS

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